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Middle East war tautens big power nerves

As coincidence would have it, the latest round of fighting in the Middle East began as the UN General Assembly was being convened.

Countries from all over the world, the great powers and the less powerful, met in New York for what must surely have appeared to be an ideal opportunity for crisis management.

But do the great powers really want to do their utmost to end hostilities? At present it looks more as though they would prefer to look on while marshalling their own weapons.

When crises occur in oil-rich regions the United States starts to show symptoms of unease that could lead to panic if supplies are threatened.

There is talk of low reserves, spiralling prices on the spot market and what might happen if, say, Iran were to blockade the Strait of Hormuz.

There are fears it will be even longer before the US embassy hostages are released. The prevailing mood ranges from nervous to tension-laden.

President Carter has stressed US neutrality in the fighting between Iran and Iraq. So, for its part, has the Soviet Union.

America is keeping a low initial profile yet also keeping an eye on its opposite number in Moscow. But behind the scenes the military build-up is under way.

The United States already has 31 warships in the region. A further aircraft carrier and accompanying craft are heading to the area from Kenya. Phantom jets are on standby in Egypt.

The Soviet Union has a comparable array of military hardware at the ready, but for the time being it, too, is neutral.

Yet for all its neutrality, the Soviet Union is somewhat pro-Iraq. There are no signs that it is calling a halt to arms supplies to Baghdad or exerting diplomatic pressure on Iraq.

Moscow has a friendship treaty with Baghdad. Is the Kremlin keen to teach Khomeini-style Islam a lesson?

Pentagon experts do not set great store by the fighting strength of the Iranian army but reckon the more powerful Iranian navy ought to be able to close the Strait of Hormuz, which would deal a potentially mortal blow to the West's oil supplies.

The Carter Doctrine that the Persian Gulf is an area of vital interest to the United States would then have to come into force, with increasing pressure on the President to send the troops in and reopen the Strait.

The possibilities of escalation are alarming but it would be wrong to turn a blind eye to them. Much will depend on talks between Herr Genscher and Mr Gromyko and, more particularly, between Mr Muskie and Mr Gromyko.

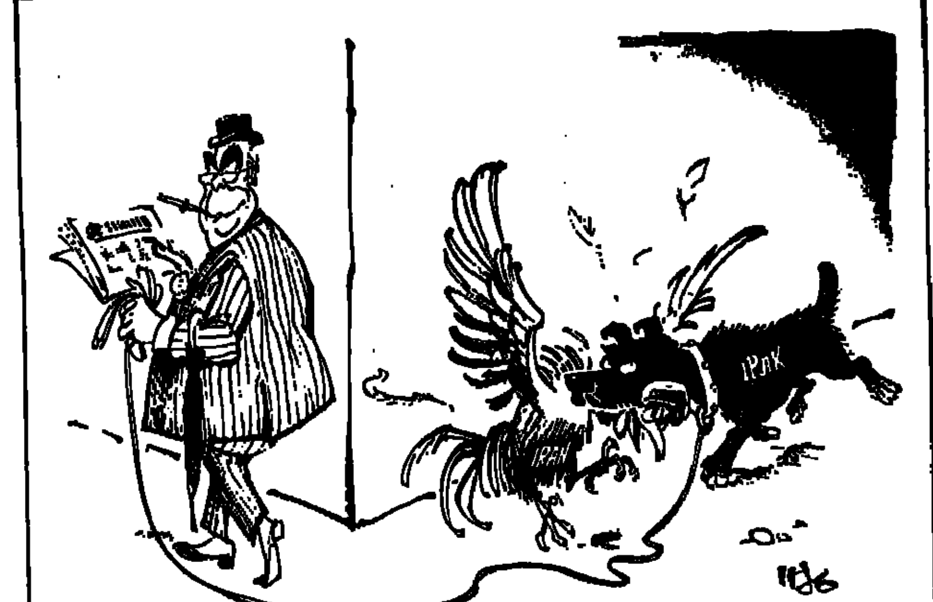
The Soviet Foreign Minister, who delivered an aggressive, unconciliatory speech to the General Assembly, ignored the war. This would seem to indicate that the Kremlin has yet to reach a final decision on its point of view.

Mr Gromyko could learn much from the US viewpoint in New York, which is that the world may be doomed if fighting in the Persian Gulf gets out of hand.

Hans-Joachim Nimtz

(Frankfurter Neue Presse, 25 September 1980)

IN THIS ISSUE



Seeing nothing, hearing nothing, knowing nothing.
(Cartoon: Horst Haitzinger/Nordwest Zeitung)

Genscher slates Soviet arms proposal

Bonn Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher became the first Nato spokesman to point out at the UN the drawback to Mr. Gromyko's seemingly generous offer to freeze armaments at the level of 1 January 1981.

The fundamental prerequisite, balance of power, did not exist, he said, and it was the Soviet Union that was engaged in an arms build-up out of all proportion, especially in Europe.

It remains to be seen what substance will remain of the Soviet Foreign Minister's surprisingly caustic comments and what was merely said for theatrical effect.

He and US Secretary of State Edmund Muskie were due to resume disarmament talks shortly, and a European disarmament conference had already cast its shadow even though a deadline had not yet been set.

Herr Genscher pointed out that more was needed than a complex estimate of reciprocal destructive capacity. Confidence-building measures also mattered.

Confidence, he said, was indivisible, which was a point that deserved to find a permanent place in political vocabulary.

It is an argument the Soviet Union will be unable to disregard if indeed it takes disarmament seriously.

It is an apparent anachronism (but only seemingly so) for disarmament to be discussed at the UN while countries are at war again in the Middle East.

The countries concerned are, after all, using arms and armament supplied by the superpowers. So arms limitation must also mean limiting the export of arms.

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 25 September 1980)

New York meeting shows Bonn, East Berlin keen to talk

Bonn and East Berlin are still keen to talk — that is the only message that can be drawn from the meeting in New York of Bonn Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and the GDR's Oskar Fischer.

Their meeting at the United Nations took place despite the cancellation of the meeting between Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and East German leader Erich Honecker.

Intra-German ties are not part of Herr Genscher's job, so a few years ago the new of his meeting with Herr Fischer would have been the subject of special mention.

Nowadays it is merely viewed as proof that both sides are keen to ease the tension in intra-German ties despite the tension that characterises world affairs at present.

Since Herr Fischer would not overstep the brief given him by East German leader Erich Honecker, the intra-German encounter in New York must be read as a sign from East Berlin.

Herr Genscher significantly announced beforehand that he would not, to the point of self-abnegation, be discussing bilateral issues, merely multilateral problems.

This was intended to play down the intra-German aspect of his talks with Herr Fischer, but experience shows that ties of this kind must be seen in the overall context.

What the two men discussed may well be included in intra-German talks even though intra-German negotiations may officially be held by other politicians or envoys.

So Herr Genscher's meeting with his GDR opposite number cannot fail to have been of use in one way or another.

While his encounter with Herr Fischer may prove to have an indirect bearing on practical politics, the wider-ranging talks with Nato Foreign Ministers accomplished more specific results.

Agreement was reached in New York, for instance, that there would be no point in the Helsinki review conference, scheduled to begin in Madrid on 11 November, unless the Soviet Union agreed to confidence-building measures beforehand.

A European disarmament conference held in the wake of the Helsinki agreement could only be considered if the East bloc were prepared to include the whole of European Russia, from the Baltic to the Urals, as the conference's terms of reference.

So Herr Genscher had no shortage of topics with which to play in his address to the General Assembly and subsequent meeting with Mr Gromyko, his Soviet counterpart.

Mr Gromyko's speech to the UN had already conveyed some idea of the Soviet attitude, including a proposal for freezing military blocs that certainly came as a surprise.

Bodo Schulte

(Nordwest Zeitung, 24 September 1980)

WORLD AFFAIRS

Carter about-turn lifts hopes for disarmament talks

There is a reasonable prospect of a fresh start to disarmament talks between the two superpowers.

Most of the ties between Washington and Moscow are iced up, but now President Carter has decided to make an exception of disarmament.

Nine months after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan this key sector of East-West ties has been freed from the shackles of Mr Carter's post-invasion policy leitmotif of punishing and isolating the Soviet Union.

The first move in this fresh start to disarmament was the meeting on 25 September in New York between US Secretary of State Muskie and Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko at which Mr Muskie proposed that talks on reducing medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe begin on 13 October in Geneva.

But the Carter administration regarded this as no more than the first step. It has lately gone to great lengths to per-



suade the US Senate to ratify Salt 2 and thereby pave the way for Salt 3 talks.

Defence Secretary Harold Brown says talks must get under way by next spring at the latest, otherwise disarmament might sustain lasting damage.

Both he and Mr Muskie are strongly in favour of continued priority for disarmament talks despite setbacks since the invasion of Afghanistan.

It must have required some courage by Mr Carter to suggest a time and a place for talks on medium-range missiles in Europe and to try and reactivate the strategic arms limitation debate.

Both he and Mr Reagan are basing the foreign policy part of their presidential campaign package on boosting US military strength to restore the strategic superiority over the Soviet Union to which the United States has traditionally laid claim.

President Carter has certainly kept up the pace, first by launching the MX mobile ICBM programme, then by revising US nuclear strategy to include the possibility of geographically limited nuclear warfare.

This was followed by consideration of developing a new strategic bomber and by an extremely expensive US defence budget allocation.

Mr Carter is not prepared to take lying down Mr Reagan's vote-pulling accusation that under his presidency US defence potential has disintegrated.

But he has resisted the temptation to take a leaf out of Mr Reagan's book and scrap the policy of arms limitation, of which Salt is a key feature.

Even when he withdrew the Salt 2 agreement from the Senate, to which it had been submitted for ratification, he did not do so primarily to punish the Russians for the invasion of Afghanistan they had just launched.

The withdrawal was more of a rescue bid. President Carter wanted to forestall Senate rejection of Salt 2, which seemed a foregone conclusion last spring.

After the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, the Americans shelved ties with the Kremlin for a token two months before returning to business as usual. This time Mr Carter has chosen to take a little longer.

Since early summer he has refrained from further intensification of his policy of punishing and isolating the Soviet Union.

In doing so he may well have acted on the counsels of caution by French President Giscard d'Estaing and German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt.

But he has not abandoned the policy entirely. It still applies in trade with Moscow and to technological transfer.

The French and Germans may recently have negotiated contracts to supply the Soviet Union with enormous industrial plant complexes but as yet any such deal would be out of the question in the United States.

At a time when the danger of a fresh lap in an unchecked arms race seems imminent President Carter's concern is to ensure for disarmament talks their erstwhile priority.

With this aim in view he has set aside his original hopes of obliging the Soviet Union to make at least a partial withdrawal from Afghanistan.

This he had hoped to accomplish by virtue of a combination of punishment, international isolation and marking time on Salt.

As Europe had feared from the start, this policy proved a failure, which is why Mr Carter is running a high personal risk in revamping disarmament policy at this stage of his re-election campaign.

Even so, it represents a mere tactical about-turn, not a fundamental change of mind on matters of principle. Besides, he can be sure of Western European backing on this point.

Mr Brezhnev's about-turn has been much more far-reaching if his position in October last year is compared with where he stood this summer.

Before and after the December 1979 twofold Nato decision in Brussels (to modernise medium-range nuclear missile potential in Europe while offering to negotiate with Moscow on the issue) the Soviet Union refused to consider talks of any kind until the West withdrew its missile plans.

Not until February did Mr Gromyko first backpedal on this strict precondi-tion. The Nato decision, he said, either be withdrawn or suspended.

When Chancellor Schmidt conferred with Mr Brezhnev in Moscow at the end of June all Soviet preconditions had been abandoned.

The current Kremlin line is that a formal agreement on limitation of medium-range nuclear missiles can come into force until Salt 2 has been ratified.

What is more, America's forward-based systems (US nuclear bombers and submarines based in Europe) must be included in the agenda.

For the time being the Russians are not unduly interested in including British or French nuclear deterrents either in the agreement or the Western missile count.

This, they feel, can safely be left to a later round of strategic arms limitation talks.

Moscow clearly does not propose to balance its medium-range missile destruction potential of which is symbolised by a current total of 220 rockets and 60 Backfire bombers solely against the 572 US medium-range missiles earmarked for deployment in Western Europe.

The West's contribution to the deal envisaged by the Kremlin will include US bombers based in Britain, the aircraft of the US sixth Fleet stationed in the Mediterranean and the Poseidon missiles on board US nuclear submarines detailed to SHAPE but already listed in the Salt treaty.

The Americans are reluctant to do so, but no-one can expect the talks to

Continued on page 4

Military clout 'vital to detente pursuit'

Detente is one thing, arms and arms limitation another. It is still more than clear that responsible Western politicians cannot afford to engage in the one while neglecting the other.

In other words, the West can only pursue a policy of detente towards the Soviet (and do so with impunity) provided corresponding military strength is ensured.

The West's nuclear potential in Europe is not only still well below that of the Soviet Union; it is lagging ever further behind, according to the International Institute of Strategic Studies, London.

Even the Nato decision to station Cruise and Pershing 2 missiles in Western Europe from 1983 on will not forestall a shift in the balance of power to the West's detriment for several years.

This quantitative consideration is by no means alone in giving cause for alarm; so does the qualitative improvement in Soviet weaponry.

It has at least been recognised as such, as greater defence endeavours by both Bonn and Whitehall indicate. But security can only be bought at a very high price.

To an increasing extent only larger countries in Western Europe can afford to pay it, whereas smaller Nato allies, such as Belgium or Denmark, are no longer in a position to maintain a classic defence potential consisting of an army, navy and air force.

This heightens the importance of a suggestion by General von Baudissin, the man who invented the Bundeswehr's concept of *Innere Führung*, or inner leadership.

His proposal was a division of labour between Nato countries in Europe with more or less similar financial clout at their disposal.

In the long term this idea may prove far from unrealistic, unless, that is, arms limitation talks achieve substantial success within a relatively short period.

Helge Ehler

(Bremer Nachrichten, 18 September 1980)

French back unified Germany – poll

A majority of French people favour free elections and reunification of Germany, according to a poll published by *Le Quotidien*, the Paris daily, as part of its advance coverage of the West German election campaign.

Fifty-four per cent were in favour, whereas 26 per cent were against a united Germany. A further majority (42 to 36 per cent) felt it would be only natural for Germany, like France, to have its own independent nuclear deterrent.

The 1,000 Frenchmen polled last month by Institut Public S.A. did not feel there was much to choose between political parties in the Bonn Bundestag.

Twenty-seven per cent in each case felt the Christian or Social Democrats respectively were better qualified to promote Franco-German cooperation.

Thirty-six per cent either took kindly to Franz Josef Strauss or held him in high repute, whereas 46 per cent were impressed by Helmut Schmidt.

Were pressure brought to bear by the Soviet Union, Herr Strauss would be the better partner, or so 35 per cent thought; yet 28 per cent preferred Herr Schmidt even in this eventuality.

In the wake of events in Poland 40 per cent felt the policy of an opening to the East needed calling into question. Thirty-two per cent did not.

Views also differed (35 per cent for, 37 per cent against) as to whether recent meetings between M. Giscard d'Estaing and Mr Brezhnev and Herr Schmidt and the Soviet leader had in any way benefited detente.

Four out of 10 Frenchmen felt the Germans resembled them most in mental outlook. Only 26 per cent felt the Italians came closer to them, with the Spaniards and the British rating a mere 7 and 8 per cent respectively.

Fifty-five per cent felt Franco-German reconciliation was signed, sealed and delivered and a mere 21 per cent felt the two might one day be on opposite sides of the fence again.

Thirty-eight per cent felt the German *Wirtschaftswunder*, or post-war economic miracle, was over and done with while 32 per cent suspected it might not yet have run its full course.

Fifty-eight per cent felt anti-terrorist measures in West Germany were either very effective or fairly effective, with only 20 per cent rating them either none too effective or ineffective.

Seventy-five per cent rated the West German state very (19 per cent) or fairly (56 per cent) democratic. Nine per cent felt it was not very democratic and 3 per cent rated it not in the least democratic.

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(Bremer Nachrichten, 23 September 1980)

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INTRA-GERMAN AFFAIRS

Berlin railway workers' stoppage shows up strange anomaly in divided city

The strike of West Berlin's rail workers has once more brought it home that anomalies are the norm in the divided city.

Even now, 35 years after war's end, the authority of the occupation powers, France, Britain, USA and the Soviet Union is the very foundation of Berlin's existence.

Without this authority, which was reaffirmed in the 3 September 1971 Four Power Agreement, the city would hardly have managed to survive because of its pivotal position between East and West.

As a result, the Allies have been prepared to put up with the anachronisms rather than endanger the city because any sweeping change would have had dire consequences.

One of these anachronisms is Berlin's rail system.

When the victorious powers agreed in the 2 August 1945 Potsdam Agreement that the rail system should be administered centrally for the whole of Germany, the Soviet Union (only a few days later) conferred this function on the *Deutsche Reichsbahn* for the whole of Berlin.

The Western Allies accepted this because it was still assumed then that Germany would one day be reunited and they wanted to have a uniform transport network for Berlin.

Nothing has changed, and the Berlin rail system remains a uniquely curious structure.

The *Deutsche Reichsbahn*, which East Germany took over after 1949, is responsible for the entire freight and passenger traffic between Berlin and the Federal Republic of Germany. It is also responsible for the Berlin city transit sytem, the *S-Bahn*.

But the GDR has only operating rights in West Berlin — and hence also an operating onus.

The Allies have reserved for themselves the final authority.

The present headquarters of the *Reichsbahn* are in East Berlin. Its West Berlin staff are almost entirely West Berliners. But they are subject to GDR labour laws. In other words, all disputes are handled by East Berlin courts.

The *Reichsbahn* management recognises only the East German Free Trade Union (FDBG) as a collective bargaining partner.

Yet all concerned have fared reasonably well with this weird structure for more than 35 years. Small wonder, then, that they want to continue with the same setup. As a result, the West Berlin railroad workers' strike was doomed to failure from the very beginning.

Though public sympathy has been with them, they have been unable to find anybody to negotiate with because the whole issue is so hot that nobody wants to touch it. It is politics that has isolated the workers.

For one thing, the GDR would not permit itself to be pressured into anything, no matter how justified the material and social demands of the workers. So far as the West Berlin strikers are concerned, this would be particularly risky because any giving in to them would cause considerable unrest among the East German *Reichsbahn* staff. The events in Poland have made it almost mandatory for the *Reichsbahn* management to stay tough and leave the strikers high and dry.

The strikers' demand that the West Berlin Senate negotiate with the Allies and take over the *Reichsbahn* operation in West Berlin was unrealistic from the very beginning.

Only the Allies could do something about it, but they have always excluded the *S-Bahn* issue from all Four Power negotiations on the grounds that it is, in any case, insoluble.

The *Reichsbahn* issue is one of those unsolved items that characterise the status of Berlin.

According to the Four Power Agreement, this status may not be changed unilaterally. And at present nobody — neither the Allies nor the GDR nor Bonn nor the Berlin Senate — has the least interest in discussing this delicate point.

It is, however, known that the GDR would like to get rid of its *S-Bahn* which has been running at a deficit and has been the source of a great many headaches.

It is quite possible that Bonn and GDR representatives will start secret talks in an effort to arrive at some arrangement.

In a few months, when the emotions have simmered down, it could well be possible to find a mutually satisfactory solution which would have to be approved by the Allies.

The West Berlin *Reichsbahn* workers (whose industrial action had but one aim: to improve their working conditions) might well have to pay dearly for their political naiveté. They will come out of it empty-handed and will probably lose their jobs to boot.

This is what happens to those who disregard the legal and political realities of Berlin.

Volker Skierka

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 24 September 1980)

Strikers action conflicted with policies of both East, West

West Berlin's striking railway workers have not achieved their aim. They either overestimated their strength or failed to see that their action was interfering with East-West policy.

Most of the activists have been fired. The rest are left to get the S-Bahn and freight lines going again.

Any disruption of the transit traffic is undesirable. Bonn and East Berlin, the Western Allies and the Soviets, agree that in today's unsettled world Berlin must be kept out of trouble. The delicate balance that has resulted from many treaties must be maintained.

The GDR therefore hesitated to get tough with the strikers, whom it called "terrorists". When it finally did so on the sixth day of the strike its railroad police did not go beyond the confines of *Reichsbahn* territory in West Berlin and the limits set by the Western Allies.

The East German policemen used axes and dogs to clear the strikers out of the traffic control buildings. As ordered by the Western Allies some time ago, they were unarmed except for truncheons.

Western authorities, on the other hand, made a point of not lending material support to the strikers. In fact, the Senate even undermined the strikers' blockade of the transit passenger traffic by busing the passengers to their destinations.

The trade unions have restricted themselves to verbal support. But there are those who say that the whole thing was cooked up on the periphery of the West German Railroad Workers' Union congress in West Berlin recently.

In fact, it is rumoured that the initiators of the strike had hoped that the action would spread to the GDR and cause a situation similar to that in Poland.

If this is true, the executive boards of Western trade unions should look into the matter. This line of thought not only shows ignorance regarding conditions in the GDR but could also prove very dangerous.

Any comparison of the Berlin strikers with those in Gdansk is lopsided — and most West Berliners realised this from the very beginning.

Though the West Berlin public showed understanding for the strikers' wage demands, the West Berlin *Reichsbahn* workers did not enjoy the same public sympathy as their opposite numbers in Poland.

After all, they are free to work for any West Berlin company, and when they took their jobs with the *Reichsbahn* they knew what to expect. It was and is no secret that there are neither free trade unions nor collective bargaining in the GDR.

Those West Berliners who joined the *Reichsbahn* in spite of this mostly had ideological reasons. Many of them are members of the West Berlin branch of the East German Communist Party or belong to other leftist groups.

None of the West Berlin strikers had to fear for their freedom as did those in Gdansk. All they put on the line was their jobs, with which they were dissatisfied anyway.

Those who have been fired will draw unemployment benefits in West Berlin although their social security payments went to the GDR. And those who are qualified will soon find a job in the West.

In a couple of days things will be back to normal. The *S-Bahn*, dilapidated as it is, will be running again as a burden to the GDR. And it is a burden that the West Berlin Senate is not prepared to bear.

But the recent events have bolstered the protagonists of mass transport as opposed to individual transport in West Berlin.

Although the city transit system is well developed, they support the GDR demand that the West Berlin Senate help rehabilitate the *S-Bahn* system. But nobody says who is to foot the DM2bn bill.

Liselotte Müller

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 24 September 1980)

Bundestag group goes to East Berlin meeting

An overwhelming majority at the International Parliamentary Union's East Berlin conference condemned Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Delegates from more than 80 countries voted by a margin of 680 to 181 against deleting a mention of Afghanistan from the general resolution on detente. So despite a last-minute East bloc bid the IPU called for an immediate withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan to allow people there to decide their future free from external influence.

A Bundestag delegation has been taking part in an East Berlin conference — for the first time ever. As an added piquancy, the delegation is headed by West Berlin MP Franz Amrehn (CDU) who was Willy Brandt's deputy during his time as mayor of West Berlin.

The East Berlin meeting has nothing to do with contacts between the GDR's People's Chamber and the Bundestag.

Instead, the East Berlin Palace of the Republic was the venue for the 67th Conference of the Interparliamentary Union (IPU).

Though the IPU has no legislative powers, its meeting carries weight.

Although the IPU is not very well known, it is almost 100 years old.

It was founded in Paris in 1888 as an international association of MPs aimed at maintaining personal contact and so helping peacefully to settle international disputes.

UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim sent an address in which he pointed to the dangers of the arms race.

The East Berlin meeting will anyway have plenty on its agenda considering the conflicts over Afghanistan, the Israeli-Palestinian problem and the Teheran hostage affair.

The entry of the German delegation of 19 into the People's Chamber, where 1,000 delegates from 87 countries had assembled, did not go off without a hitch; the Chamber's president, Sindermann, objected to Amrehn's participation on the grounds that he was a West Berliner.

The GDR thus made use of every opportunity to stress West Berlin's special status and isolate it even in this "mini UN".

Erich Honecker, the sponsor of the meeting, spoke of detente and deplored the growing international tension.

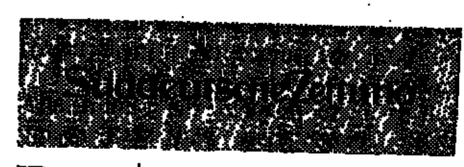
But detente should also mean that the GDR and its big Moscow brother finally stop their Berlin pinpricks and permit the Western part of the city the peace the Four Power Agreement guarantees. But this is not one of the issues on the agenda.

Fritz Lucke

(Nordwest Zeitung, 17 September 1980)

■ THE LAW

Lawyers seek reinforced rights for foreigners



Rarely has a German Lawyers' Conference dealt with a topic precisely when that topic was hitting the headlines. This year was an exception. The lawyers' discussions of the Aliens' Law came at a time of intense debate on Germany' attitudes to foreigners.

Hostility towards foreigners is increasingly dangerously in this country and the problem of political asylum is often no more than a pretext for the airing of deep-seated resentments.

The lawyers' proposals for solving the integration and asylum problems make a refreshing change from the current wave of xenophobia.

Instead of backing the harsher measures many people are calling for, the lawyers criticised the state for failings in the past. They urged the state to press forward with integration and thus ensure that the guests who wanted to spend longer periods or even the rest of their life in West Germany could become co-citizens.

The lawyers proposed that the longer foreigners stayed here the greater their rights should be. This would give foreigners here many years the same basic constitutional rights as Germans.

Specifically this means not only a reduction of the possibilities of deportation but also a liberalisation of work permit granting procedures and of the possibility of self-employed activity.

The lawyers also propose stronger legal safeguards for the wives and children of foreign workers who have established themselves in West Germany.

The lawyers also want to see more done to improve the education and vocational training of foreign children and youngsters and to ensure they have the same rights say their German peers.

Nothing could underline more clearly that the slogan "Germany is not a country for immigrants" no longer holds — now that so many guest workers have been allowed into the country for economic reasons.

These demands are not at all new. The lawyers gathered in Berlin stressed that their demands squared fully with the requirements of the constitution. But they certainly do not fit into the general political mood of the country at the moment. Maybe the lawyers could be accused of naivety or of making their proposals at the worst possible time.

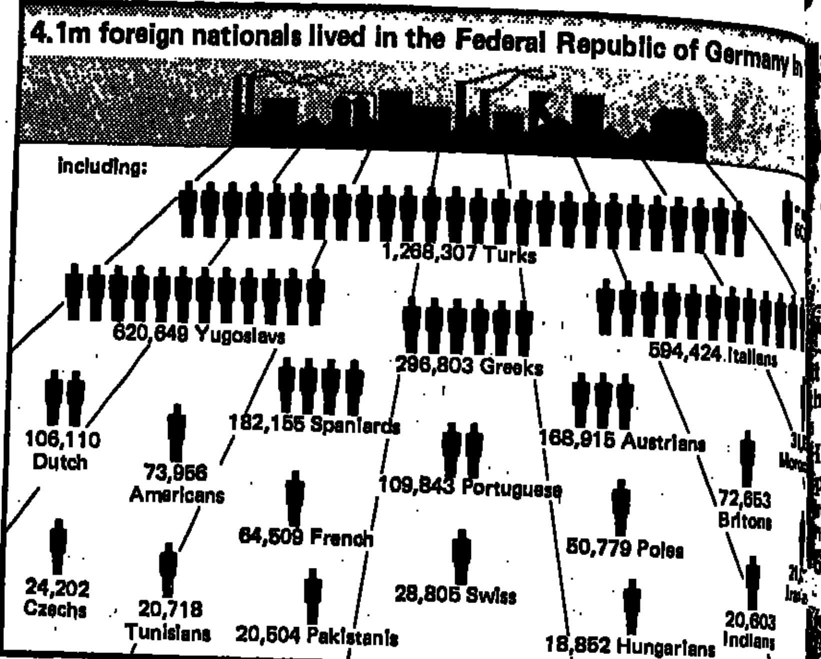
However, this objection will hardly bother the lawyers — their function is not to pursue short-sighted practical policies but to give politicians food for thought — even if the politicians sometimes find this unpalatable.

The Lawyers' Conference also discussed the political rights of foreigners. However, the lawyers were cautious about whether foreigners should be given the active or passive right to vote — at least in local council elections. Lawyers do not seem to be too happy about these proposals.

They said that although there were no constitutional objections to foreigners having the right to vote in local elections, there was nothing in the constitution which said they had to be granted this right.

Because of the differences of opinion, they recommended that there should be a clarification of the issue in the Basic Law. In other words, the Lawyers' Conference recommended a conditional rejection.

This makes one wonder why another conference working party recommended a greater say for foreigners at local council level. But the only way they can get this greater say is via the vote.



On the question of the right to asylum the conference took the same line as leading politicians. There was general and unsentimental agreement in Berlin that the influx of non-genuine applicants for political asylum can only be stopped by speeding up recognition procedures and administrative court procedures.

This is why they want to give the relevant powers greater scope to deal summarily with clearly bogus applications. In such cases, the possibilities which now exist of prolonging the case would be reduced to nil.

The lawyers believe, for example, that it would be the refusal of a work permit for the first year after the submission of an application would be a legitimate way of deterring bogus applicants. By this means it is hoped that the situation in West Germany will soon be similar to that in Austria, where applicants for asylum have to spend only two months in internment camps.

With rare exceptions, this is how long it takes to reach a decision on applications.

To sum up it can be said that the Lawyers' Conference adopted a programmatic approach to the problem of the foreigners already living here. Its approach to the problem of new applicants for political asylum, on the other hand, was more pragmatic.

The Lawyers' Conference proposals thus made a refreshing change from those of those who, because of the present desperate situation, want to abolish the right to political asylum guaranteed in the constitution.

Rainer Kl

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 19 September)

Change in life imprisonment laws recommended

German lawyers want the mandatory life imprisonment sentence for murder to be changed.

It would mean that, in certain circumstances, convicted murderers would not be sentenced to life imprisonment.

The proposals were made at the German Lawyers' Conference in Berlin.

They are bound to cause, at the least, violent discussion.

There are many people in West Germany who still have not got over the abolition of the death penalty.

Throughout the world, executions seem to be the order of the day. The hangman has his hands full.

News of executions in Iran have, unfortunately, almost become routine. When an opposition leader in South Korea was sentenced to death, the whole world protested.

Throughout the world, it is judges who decide about life, guilt and atonement. Some of these judges are under political pressure. And others are granted the freedom to determine the punishment themselves.

In this confused world of legal concepts the German Lawyers' Conference has made a remarkable move.

If this revolutionary proposal were to find it way into the penal code, it could give rise to controversy such as has not been seen since the abolition of the death penalty.

The Berlin resolution by the lawyers is still overshadowed by the general election campaign. But no doubt some electioneer will hit on the bright idea of hammering the lawyer's proposal. And this is precisely why a warning seems appropriate.

The first point is that few countries in the world can afford to hold such a discussion about liberalisation of the penal code.

Critics of the lawyers' proposals will no doubt argue that it will remove a deterrent. Prospective murderers will no longer need to fear spending the rest of their life behind bars. However, judges have often complained that under the present system it is extremely difficult



to decide on the right sentences for murder and manslaughter.

Judges find it increasingly difficult to pass sentence where criteria such as intention, malice and cruelty can increase the sentence and a murderer can get the benefit of mitigating circumstances if he acted out of passion.

The lawyer's dissatisfaction with the judgement of capital crimes is justified. Often, an expert opinion decides whether to the crime is regarded as murder or manslaughter.

Loosening the chains on the act may make it seem as if murderers can reckon with clemency. But this is a superficial view. Quite apart from the fact that a "life" sentence is never for "life".

Even though there is no Bundestag majority for the reform of the penal code in the judging of death and manslaughter, the Lawyers' Conference has at least made a thought-provoking move.

There is much talk in this country about sentencing — unlike in other countries where punishments including the death penalty are imposed without inhibition. German lawyers have emphatically rejected the notion of the summary trial. Things are different elsewhere. The distinction is significant.

Günter Tilliger

(Frankfurter Neue Presse, 22 September 1980)

Disarmament prospects

Continued from page 2

gress without horse-trading of some kind or other.

What matters is that the two superpowers are keen to negotiate separately Eurostrategic weapons so as to ensure that agreement of any kind is reached and that the United States does so in close collaboration with its allies.

Nine months after the invasion of Afghanistan, which was a severe setback to East-West ties, there is now a possibility of approximating the balance of power in Europe at the conference table.

The outcome of these talks might partially, or even entirely, relieve the West of the need to embark on the nuclear arms modernisation programme.

Had it not been for Helmut Schmidt's visit to Moscow at the time the chose to make it, this prospect might well not have been there for the asking.

Whether or not anything comes of it will naturally depend to no small extent on the outcome of the US Presidential elections.

At least for the time being Mr Reagan advocates an approach entirely different from President Carter's.

But US experts and Western European governments are confident no US President be it Jimmy Carter or Ronald Reagan, can ignore the disarmament imperative in the nuclear era.

Kurt Becker

(Die Zeit, 26 September 1980)

■ LABOUR

Mixed feelings about job creation schemes, as unemployment rises

Special expenditure on relieving unemployment cannot be maintained at its current level this year because there is not enough money.

Last year Bonn Minister of Labour Herbert Ehrenberg spent DM500m on special programmes for regions with the worst unemployment problems.

This sum was almost doubled by various labour offices.

If the coalition is re-elected, Herr Ehrenberg could well find himself still as Labour Minister and therefore still confronted with one of his most serious problems.

The prospects are not good. Quite apart from the fact that there will be 130,000 school leavers entering the market, the slight economic downturn is also likely to boost jobless figures.

Unemployment this year has averaged around 800,000. Next year it is unlikely to be less than one million.

Solutions are expensive and difficult. On the one hand the minister will have to do something — with one million unemployed he will have to give an impression of tireless industry, even if this achieves nothing. On the other hand he will not be able to repeat what he did last year, spending DM500m.

Why not? The money simply is not there.

In the remaining months of this year the Chancellor's Office and the ministries will have to scrape together DM 1.9 billion to finance the budget.

And things will remain just as gloomy next year.

Ehrenberg has said that new economy-boosting programmes will soon be necessary. Such programmes would contain money for special employment-boosting measures — money not available from the normal ministry budget.

Herr Ehrenberg could then create new jobs. However, both unions and employers are distinctly cool.

Heinz Kluncker's ÖTV (Transport and Public Service Workers) is annoyed about job creation schemes which, it says, benefit mainly the local authorities.

Instead of taking on permanent staff, the towns and local councils take on the unemployed — and their wage costs are often covered 100 per cent and more by the Bonn government and the employment offices.

The employers are equally disgruntled. They think that far too much money is being pumped into these schemes, even though they and the local councils concerned do not say no when offered it.

The schemes do not permanently improve the employment situation, runs their argument. There is no "carry-over" effect.

This criticism is harsh — but not unfounded. Close study of the DM500m programme started by the government in the summer of 1979 — to which the employment offices added another DM430m — shows that no spectacular successes have been achieved.

It is only fair to add here though that the final success of the job creation programmes will only be able to be judged next year, when the various employment subsidies expire.

The first main feature of the programme was to improve the qualification of workers in companies adapting and switching production. This was something new — though pedants might object that in-company retraining can be done without special programmes — though then the subsidies would be somewhat smaller.

The basic idea sounds plausible enough. Instead of waiting until someone is sacked before retraining him, you train him on the job as soon as his job is threatened.

Those gaining skilled worker qualifications earn for their company 90 per cent of their wage costs; otherwise they only get 80 per cent.

There seem to have been some carry-over effects here, but they were probably none too great. Even the National Federation of Employers' Associations concedes that the generous rise of the subsidies induced many companies to put many a planned rationalisation measure on ice.

On the whole, the general effect was "not bad."

About DM400m has been assigned to further in-service training schemes. A large part of this money may make the later payment of unemployment benefit superfluous and will thus have been well invested.

And the remainder will have been nothing but public subsidising of company restructuring which is taking place every day and everywhere.

The second main feature of the Ehrenberg programme was a total flop. The "reintegration of the unskilled and the long-term unemployed" has had little resonance and possibly even less success. The employment offices have simply sent the companies too few candidates — although unskilled and long-term unemployed take up a great deal of place in their files.

The reasons for this are well known to all concerned: undoubtedly there is a considerable number of underqualified people and many who have been out of work for a long time through no fault of their own.

On the other hand there are those that can simple be described as the dregs of the labour market, who would run a mile at Olympic pace to avoid even the whiff of a job.

Employment policies should not address themselves to these people. Rather they are cases for the social worker.

Improvement of social work is preci-

Continued on page 7

Poll finds out what the workers think

Forty-six per cent of members of the metal workers' union, IG Metall, believe that strikes do more harm than good in the long run.

Sixty-four per cent of all metal industry workers agree that strikes and lock-outs are a legitimate part of free collective bargaining.

These are two of the findings of a poll commissioned by Gesamtmetall, the employers' association of the metal-working industry.

The poll, conducted by the Munich research institute, Infratest, found that workers in the industry, half of whom belong to IG Metall, clearly approve of the union.

A total of 71 per cent of those polled approved of the union, in varying degrees involving a sliding scale of points.

Even 60 per cent of the non-union workers polled said their sympathies were with the union.

About 19 per cent of members did not like the union.

The employers' association view: "On the whole, the IG Metall enjoys a very high standing among metal workers, but it is not without competition. Even more workers — 73 per cent — had positive attitudes towards their own management."

Only 16 per cent of all workers and 17 per cent of ordinary union members thought there was complete identity of interests between the unions and the employers; 83 per cent of all workers and 81 per cent of union members, excluding officials, said that there were at least on occasions differences between their interests and those of the trade unions.

The distance from the trade unions is therefore clear, despite general sympathy. Even 75 per cent of union officials said that the IG Metall occasionally pursued interests which did not square with those of the workers.

This applied also to the work of union shop stewards; 49 per cent of workers were convinced that the shop stewards often represented special union interests. And 46 per cent of ordinary union members agreed.

IG Metall probably only has unqualified support from workers in matters such as wage negotiations, job guarantees, further education and in-service training and the improvement of terms and conditions.

Support for union advocacy of the shorter working week is more muted. Here one in five members advises caution on the future. Support for union general social policies is minimal. Only 16 per cent of IG Metall members support investment controls and the corresponding figure for shop stewards is only 30 per cent.

At its trade union congress in Berlin IG Metall called for a ban on lockouts, which would give them superiority in labour disputes.

This is not supported by metal workers, 64 per cent of whom agree that strikes and lockouts are part of free collective bargaining.

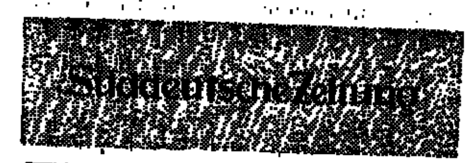
This is a view shared by 62 per cent of ordinary union members and only 33 per cent of trade union officials.

Most workers and 46 per cent of trade union members believe that in the long run strikes do more harm than good. Only 39 per cent of those asked concluded from the fact of a lockout that employers were hostile to workers, 59 per cent disagreed.

(Handelsblatt, 22 September 1980)

■ FINANCE

Bundesbank keeps hand on the tiller through open-market means



The Bundesbank has been using various instrument open to it on the open market to control the nation's economy.

These instruments have the advantage of being extremely flexible, but they also prevent other parties involved from having a clear view of the behaviour of the market place.

Under the Bundesbank's current policy, any excesses by the financial markets are nipped in the bud.

This means that the Bundesbank does not give untimely economic signals but it also means that stock exchange and foreign exchange dealers must act blindfold. People who have no exact data at their fingertips have no choice but to act by guess and by God. It remains for the Bundesbank to prove that this is a desirable effect of its policy.

Open market operations of the Bundesbank since the middle of this year add up to billions. And this is likely to cause unrest on the markets. But what is more interesting is not the gross addition but the ultimate balance sheet.

And here is how it works: when the Bundesbank wants to control the money supply it avails itself of a range of instruments at its disposal. It can lower or increase the minimum reserve (the amount of money banks must keep on interest-free deposit with the Bundesbank) or it can vary the borrowing capacity of the banks by means of banker's acceptances.

But these instruments are of a rather spectacular nature and the public usually views them as a signal for a change in credit policy.

As a result, the Bundesbank likes an open-market policy. It buys or sells securities or foreign exchange — frequently only for a specific period. If it buys securities with the intention of keeping them for a few weeks only, it takes them on as "boarders" so to speak. Hence the term "boarding deals" in the securities sector.

If the same thing is done with foreign exchange, the Bundesbank exchanges the foreign currency for domestic money. This is known as a "swap deal".

The Bundesbank opted for a stepped up open-market policy when it turned out that the banks were forces to make use of Lombard loans. This involves a virtually unlimited line of credit in which the banks deposit securities as a collateral — a practice which has long been a thorn in the flesh of the Bundesbank because such deals are very difficult to regulate.

Be this as it may, such Lombard loans should be replaced by providing the banks with liquidity or, when necessary, cutting back on liquidity temporarily.

Foreign exchange swaps have been a subject of public discussion for some weeks. But recently attention was focussed on a securities boarding deal involving DM 3.8 bn which expired at the end of August and was replaced by an even bigger deal of this nature (DM 5.4 bn).

At the end of August, when the banks had to redeem these securities and pay the Bundesbank, the central bankers lowered the minimum reserve to approximately that extent to perpetuate the monetary shot in the arm.

It is impossible to say to what extent the market has been affected in net terms because at the same time some foreign exchange swap deals also fell due.

A normal swap deal means that the Bundesbank buys foreign exchange with the understanding between the two parties that the currency will be bought back on a certain date.

Thus the banks receive money to start with but have to return it on due date. This rarely affects the minimum reserve because the banks obtain the dollars they have to turn over to the Bundesbank through follow-up swap deals. This is likely to have cost 8.6. to 8.7 per cent per annum in the past few months.

Last month, DM 1.5 bn in swap deals fell due, followed by another [...] bn. In the course of the month, [...] DM 2 bn to DM 2.5 bn could fall du[e].

Depending on whether the [...] bank considers the future on the [...] market has problems or not, it wi[ll ...] further swap deals.

One thing has, however, [...] Such swap deals are suitable fo[r ...] term monetary steering while [...] boarding can only be used effect[ively ...] the central bank wants to influ[ence the] entire market.

How long will the central ba[nk con]tinue to steer its present course, [which] is marked by adequate liquidity [...] tion in giving signals?

This will largely depend on the [for]eign trade position. In fact, a p[relimi]nary decision has already been [...] The unusually wide gap between [the] discount and the Lombard rate [has] been reduced from 2 to 1.5 per[centage] points by lowering the Lombard [rate] leaving the discount rate as is.

This is a moderate signal wh[...] have an immediate effect on the [...] market.

Should further adjustment be [...] the Bundesbank would again ha[ve to] avail itself of its open market i[nstru]ments.

But our amazingly resilient ec[onomy] and the balance of payments defic[it ...] for the gentleness of a harp rathe[r than] the big brass drum.

Otto Schw[...]

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 19 Septemb[er 1980])

The currency becomes a campaign issue

Currency reforms like those that destroyed the nation's savings after the end of both world wars will not be repeated in this country — at least, not as long as an independent Bundesbank keeps its eye on our money.

There is also no indication of a political constellation in Bonn that could change this: all democratic parties must do their utmost to prevent such a contingency if they want to survive.

And in fact all parties have promised the electorate exactly that. Yet the deutschemark has become an issue in the election campaign — and nobody knows who started the ball rolling.

Finance Minister Hans Matthöfer says it was a Swiss information service.

North Rhine-Westphalia's Prime Minister Johannes Rau (also SPD) made a remark during a State Assembly debate on the subject that created the impression that he considered a currency reform a suitable instrument of government policy.

It is regrettable that certain Opposition politicians ware unable to resist the temptation to seize upon the issue.

It is also regrettable that the CDU/CSU platform contains certain phrases which operate with currency reforms.

In fact, level-headed Opposition politicians would probably be delighted if they could somehow make the whole thing unsaid.

But unfortunately, there it is in black and white. At least, Franz Josef Strauss tried to make amends by saying in a TV broadcast: "I don't speak of a currency reform; and I don't say that we will wake up one day to find that te[...] schemarks are only worh fiv[e ...] never said this and this is certai[nly ...] my view."

Even so, there was an exchange of l[et]ters between Strauss and Bundesb[ank] President Pöhl and even Matth[öfer] spoke up on the subject, saying [that] "our currency derserves and needs c[on]fidence."

Nobody will contradict him there.

But the whole thing is indicativ[e of] the nervousness in the government. [The] reason probably lies in the fact that t[he] arguments of the Opposition (if o[nly] they did not use the term "currency r[e]form") are sound.

State indebtedness has reached s[uch] proportions as to dangerously [...] the financial scope of the public sect[or].

According to the medium-[term] finance plan, federal spending will [...] to DM226bn (5.5 per cent) next year.

To finance this, Bonn will have t[o in]crease its borrowing from DM 24[...] this year to DM 27 bn in 1981.

Moreover, Herr Matthöfer has [...] said how he intends to make up [the] loss of revenue resulting from [...] reform.

Should the pessimists prove right and should the economic decline be [more] than just a passing phenomenon, [re]venues will drop still further. [At the] same time, there will be clamour[ing for] more government spending to boo[st the] economy. And this means more [go]vernment borrowing.

The Bundesbank has already [...] asked to take its foot off the infla[tion] brake. This means that the public [...] feel the inflation pinch even more.

It is the Opposition's right to point [out] these dangers and their causes. But [it] should stop talking of a currency refo[rm].

Hans-Henning Zen[...]

(Kieler Nachrichten, 15 September [1980])

Gatt plea to step up investment

Fighting inflation with the aim of removing uncertainties in the investment climate is one of the appeals by the Secretariat of Gatt in its annual report.

The Geneva-based organisation also calls for protectionist measures to be removed and cartels to be broken up.

Gatt says that the present adjustment problems can only be solved by stepped-up investments.

The non-oil exporting developing countries, which have to cope with enormous balance of payments problems, must at the same time try to reduce their external debts and increase domestic capital — an almost impossible undertaking. But only thus can they improve their export potential.

The industrial nations, on the other hand, whose balance of payments problems are not that grave, must step up investments to adapt to rising oil prices and to create jobs in those sectors of industry where productivity is particularly high.

Gatt views current developments with some optimism.

As opposed to the time immediately after the first oil shock, the present slowdown in economic growth is not due to cutbacks in investment but to the reticence of the private consumer.

World production in 1979 rose by four per cent over 1978. But unemployment in the industrial countries also began rising at the end of last year.

The inflation rate is also beginning to gallop again. Consumer goods prices in the industrial countries rose by 11 per cent last December over the same month in 1978 — the highest rate since 1974. By May 1980, the inflation rate was up to 12.5 per cent.

The volume of world trade (in dollars) rose by 25 per cent to more than 1,600 bn in 1979, compared with 16 per cent in 1978.

The first six months of this year showd a rise of 30 per cent, mainly due to steep price increases.

In real terms (adjusted for inflation) Gatt estimates last year's increase in world trade at about six per cent.

The explanation given for the steeper rise of trade over productivity is the stagnation of agricultural production in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and some developing countries.

World trade in manufactured goods rose 5.5 per cent, roughly the same as production.

The growth in the volume of world trade diminished in the first six months of this year to about four to five per cent.

The balance of payments surplus of the Opec countries, which amounted to 5bn dollars in 1978, is likely to rise to 115 billion this year.

During the same period the industrial nations' surplus of 30.3 bn turned into a deficit of 60bn.

Hans-J. Mahnke

(Die Welt, 17 September 1980)

BUSINESS

Cost, energy, health, boost the comeback of two-wheelers

[The] first two days of the 14th Inter[natio]nal Bicyle and Motorcycle Show in [Colo]gne attracted 180,000 visitors. The [ind]ustry, buoyed by rising sales, has [proc]laimed the 1980s the decade of the [...]e. Above all, the bicycle has seen an [unp]recedented comeback which has [pro]mpted the Federal Environment [Auth]ority to devote a four-day [symp]osium to it.

[B]icycle sales in the first six month of this year rose by nearly 30 per cent [over] the same period in 1979.

And 92,000 new motorcycles of over [50]cc were licensed in the first six month, a 25 per cent increase over last year.

These are two of the figures which illustrate the boom that was built up in [tw]o-wheel transport over the past few years.

Thousands of all ages have been converted. Families make leisurely trips to [th]e countryside, complete with picnic [b]asket, overtaken by leather-clad hot-rodders on their four-stroke motorbikes.

Sales of all types of motorcycles went up only 2.6 per cent in the first six months. But this figure is deceptive because it reflects the drop in sales for the smaller mopeds and similar vehicles due to uncertainty about driving licence regulations and the compulsory wearing of crash helmets.

But motorbikes of more than 50cc were best sellers: The first six months of this year saw the licensing of 92,000 new motorbikes in this category — up 25 per cent on the same period last year and almost as much as in the whole of 1979.

It is therefore not surprising that this year's Cologne show will attract more visitors than any of its predecessors.

What is at the root of this boom? For one thing, there is the health kick. And is there a better way of showing that one is young and dynamic than astride a powerful motorbike? But quite apart from such ulterior motives, two — wheelers are simply fun — and to most this is reason enough to join the growing fraternity. Energy consciousness has also had its effect. Bicycling requires no fuel at all and motorbikes are much more economical than cars.

Family vehicle: this three-wheeler is designed to take a full load — including baby. It was on show in Cologne. (Photo: dpa)

Moreover, a lot of people have money to spare which they would like to put into something special.

Bicycles and motorbikes can be displayed publicly while expensive furniture and hifi equipment can only be admired by friends.

This general trend has changed the face of the cycle market. The collapsible bicycle, once praised as the ultimate synthesis of motorised and non-motorised transport because it stows easily in the boot of a car, is passé.

Its only advantage, i. e. its collapsibility, far from outweighs the many disadvantages. Besides, the cheap bicycle is no longer a seller. The scene is dominated by the ultra-lightweight sport and racing varieties with a wide range of gears and costing not less than a four-digit deutschemark figure.

But there is also another trend towards the maximum of comfort. Those who do not want to have their bones shaken out because the extremely hard tyres of the racing machines go for the *gemütlich* touring bike with its comfortable saddle. Makers and dealers are jubilant: The average buyer is happy to pay between DM400 and DM500 for these bikes and is quite prepared to keep the pursestrings open for a few extras.

The bicycle is no longer the poor man's transport. In fact, it has become an alternative lifestyle vehicle with all the ideology that goes with it.

The smaller motorbikes (up to 50cc) must also provide quality to find buyers. Cheap models don't sell, nor do those that try to present a front of luxury without keeping this promise.

Most of these low-cc vehicles are driven by juveniles between 15 and 18 and paid for by the parents.

German-made in upper price range

Those who like to buy German have to pay more. Manufacturers here specialise in the upper price range vehicles, trusting in the quality consciousness of teenagers and their tenacity in nagging the parents.

There is a change of trend concerning small motorbikes. The present bicycle with an auxiliary motor will give way as at the beginning of next year to the newly defined light motorbike which will be less noisy and not so easily souped up.

Horsepower obsession is an important motivating force in buyers of motorbikes; but the insurance premiums are acting as a brake here. As a result, only 18 per cent of the newly licenced motorbikes in the first six months of this year had engines of more than 750cc.

Though most motorbike fans dream of these heavy machines, they ultimately settle for the low insurance premium range of up to 27hp which can be bought for between DM4,000 and DM6,000. These motorbikes dominate the market where they have cornered a 40 per cent share.

Japanese makes account for 85 per cent of German sales because Japanese makers have cleverly flooded the market with a wide range to suit all tastes.

So called enduro bikes and soft choppers of the American-style Easyrider variety now account for more than one-third of sales and are still advancing.

If it were not for long delivery times, spare part shortages and shoddy servicing, the motorbike sky would be unclouded.

Gerold Lingnau

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 19 September 1980)

Unemployment

Continued from page 5

[Wh]y the third main feature is all about, [it]s official title being "improvement of [so]cial services and social infrastructure."

Ministry of Labour officials enthuse about this aspect of the programme. More jobs have been reported and more money applied for this aspect than for any other: DM430m by means of which over 8,000 new jobs have been financed. (For comparison: the last programme only created 3,000 jobs, of which no one knows how many will still exist in a year.)

This demand is unsurprising. It has long been known that jobs in the social services or environment would only be filled when the money was available — and the money was not available.

Now it is there. The question is whether these jobs should be paid for partly out of Bonn government money and partly out of national insurance contributions. If health insurance contributions were used to buy weapons for the Bundeswehr, this would hardly be a greater abuse.

The Ministry of Labour argues that new jobs have been created after all. But they cannot guarantee the permanence of these jobs. No one knows how these jobs are going to be financed in 1981 if the shower of gold from Bonn or the employment offices should suddenly cease to fall.

Dieter Piel

(Die Zeit, 19 September 1980)

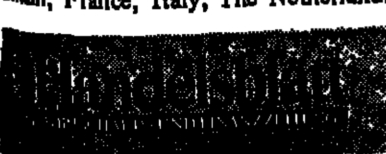
The European patent gives across-border protection

The European patent Office, which was founded in November 1977 and has now moved into new modern [qu]arters in Munich, has become a sym[bo]l of West European cooperation.

The offices in the black glass colossus on the banks of Munich's Isar River are inundated with patent applications from all parts of the world because Europatents are valid in 11 European countries.

Members of the European patent Organisation are West Germany, Great Britain, France, Italy, The Netherlands,





Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Sweden, Austria and Liechtenstein.

Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Norway and Monaco are still to ratify the agreement. Other countries are likely to join [in] the years to come.

Some 12,500 applications have been [re]ceived since the office started accept[in]g registrations on 1 June 1978.

The first patents were issued in Janu[ary] 1980 and their number has now [ris]en to 350.

The European Patent Office employs 1,420; 470 in Munich, 830 in The Hague and 120 in Berlin.

After completion of the development phase in a few years' time, the staff will increase to 2,000, 1,000 in Munich. Many of these will be recruited from national patent offices which already have much less work than before.

The German Patent Office had 32 per cent fewer foreign applications in the first half of 1980 than in the first half of 1977, which proves that the European division of labour functions well.

The Europatent is particularly advantageous to those inventors who want simultaneous protection in several European countries. In former years, they had to file a separate application in the local language with every national patent office. To make matters worse, the criteria for granting a patent widely from country to country.

A Europatent requires only one registration in one of the three official EEC languages (German, French, English).

Though European patents cost more, they are automatically valid for three countries for an average fee of DM5,000 which means a saving in the end.

Most applications so far have come from West Germany (30.8 per cent) and the USA (24.6 per cent).

About one-third of the applications come from non-European countries.

The European Patent Office is not financed by the taxpayer but is self-supporting through its fees.

Only during the development stage (five to ten years) will the participating countries lend financial assistance in the form of low-interest loans. But these will amount to only DM4.6m of the total 1980 budget of DM156.4m.

(Handelsblatt, 18 September 1980)

■ THE ENVIRONMENT

Industrial effluent kills off life in river

The Werra is one of the most polluted rivers in Germany.

It is heavily laden with industrial effluent; alkaline pollution has killed virtually all animal life; for years swimming in it has been out of the question.

Experts feel that all they can do is register the biological demise of the Werra.

It runs 293km (183 miles) from the forest-clad hills of Thuringia, GDR, to Hannoversch-Münden, near Kassel.

There it joins with the Fulda to become the Weser, which flows north to Bremen, Bremerhaven and the North Sea.

Alkaline effluent has destroyed virtually all animal life in the Werra. Only the toughest algae and most hard-nosed fish still manage to survive in the river's murky, toxin-infested water.

Farmers too are hit by the poor quality of the water. Pollution affects its suitability as drinking water as far north as Bremen.

Alkaline pollution of the Werra has been a problem since the turn of the century, when potash mining began in the Werra valley between Eisenach and Bad Hersfeld.

In 1913 a potash effluent commission was established but did little towards putting paid to pollution of the Werra. It was pressured by industrial interests to lay down a pollution ceiling so generous as to have nothing in common with safety levels as now understood.

It virtually gave the go-ahead for unlimited pollution of the river with alkaline effluent by ruling that downstream from the mining region cloride pollution must not exceed 2,500 milligrams per litre.

The upper limit for tapwater currently laid down by the World Health Organisation is 200 milligrams.

In 1947 the potash effluent commission ruled that GDR mines were entitled to pump 61.89 per cent of the pre-war pollution ceiling into the Werra, leaving works in Hesse the remaining margin of 38.11 per cent of 2,500 milligrams.

GDR delegates have not attended meetings of the commission since 1951, but for years the agreement continued to function.

Then, in 1968, hydrologists noticed that pollution readings in Hesse were suddenly way above previous levels. In 1976, for instance, alkaline pollution in the Werra averaged five times the agreed ceiling and at times reached a count 15 times higher.

In the West potash manufacturers, having been saddled since 1947 with a smaller share of the pollution level permitted, began to pump their effluent into porous subterranean rock formations.

The GDR abandoned this practice and pumpedwaste wholesale into the Werra. It is presumed in the West to have done so because potash waste began to resurface elsewhere, polluting ground water and triggering earth movements.

West German firms have undeniably been somewhat unscrupulous in their pollution of Hesse waterways, but in the Werra's case the GDR bears most of the blame.

Ninety per cent of alkaline solution in the river downstream from the potash mining centres hails from the GDR, which nonetheless accuses the Federal Republic of reciprocal pollution, as it were.

Even though the underground potash waste shafts in the GDR have not been in use for over 10 years the East German authorities claim there has been difficulty in maintaining the quality of household water supplies in Eisenach.

The collapse of a shaft has also been attributed to potash effluent pumped underground in the West. An extensive survey to clarify matters where this claim was concerned has failed to come up with conclusive findings.

There were fresh hopes of agreement when Bonn and East Berlin signed the 1972 Basic Treaty on intra-German ties, by the terms of which both undertook to collaborate on environmental protection "to forestall danger or damage to the other side."

The first round of talks began on 29 November 1973, but the GDR refused to attend further environmental talks after the Federal Environment Agency was set up in West Berlin.

Not until April 1980 were environmental issues restored to the agenda, but in all probability it will be some time before detailed negotiations get under way.

Four issues hold pride of place at the preparatory talks begun in September:

- What proportion of pollution can be attributed to each side?
- Does subterranean waste disposal cause damage on the other side?
- What seismological repercussions does blasting have, given that it is indispensable in potash mining?
- How is mining to be arranged in the immediate border area?

A fifth issue is also at stake, but cannot be dealt with until the others have been settled. If the Werra is to be spared further pollution and subterranean disposal is ruled out for geological reasons what is to be done with the effluent?

There is only one solution so far envisaged: a pipeline from the Werra to the North Sea. Potash manufacturers would have to collect their waste and pump it north along the pipeline.

The expense would be prodigious, up to an estimated DM2bn. It remains to be seen whether the GDR would be prepared to collaborate on such a costly venture.

What is clear, however, is that the Federal Republic cannot solve the problem without the GDR's cooperation. So not only environmental awareness and economic common sense but also good neighbourliness is required.

The atmosphere at the first round of preparatory talks in East Berlin showed that hopes of a settlement have not yet been sunk without trace.

Helmut Löhlöffel

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 22 September 1980)

OUR WORLD

Team probes influences behind African clay architecture

Scholars from the Frankfurt Frobenius Institute are studying the architecture and forms of settlement in the West African states of Niger, Mali and Upper Volta.

The project, with DM455,000 from the Volkswagen Foundation, is analysing major single buildings and different types of farms.

Traditionally, most of these buildings have been made of clay. But because of the short life expectancy of the material, general cultural change and foreign influence, West African clay architecture is seriously threatened.

The study looks at the specific social conditions that have given rise to different forms of clay architecture.

The clay architecture of the region is one of the most important and at the same time least known examples of African clay architecture. This architecture is still alive and widespread, but its future is uncertain.

It is a fine example of the creative activity of the African people on a continent otherwise not rich in monumental buildings. It provides vital clues to important cultural-historical questions and connections and it is also the vital expression of African social structures which are today often unjustly underestimated, if not ignored.



An African clay settlement.

Contrast in styles of mud achitecture: a mosque in Mopti, Mali, looms over more mundane buildings. (Photos: Stiftung Volkswagenwerk)

The regional clay architecture is an impressive example of the close connections between people, environment and cultural development.

It comprises flat savannah with few mountains or forests from which stone or wood for building could be taken. And so inevitably clay is the most important material used in construction. The clay is dug out of the ground, mixed with water and then, after processing, with other materials (straw, clay from termite heaps).

The resulting substance is the basic material for most buildings. The methods of clay construction are manifold, from the simplest method of shaping the still-wet clay to using wooden or metal scaffolding, building with crude clay bricks which, when they are dry, are stuck together using wet clay as mortar.

This goes for all forms of clay architecture for farmhouses, barns, walls in the country to middle class dwellings, palaces and mosques in the centre.

Especially striking are the huge mosques with their rectangular minarets in the central west and in the central Sahara and the multi-storey peasant fortresses in nothern Togo and Benin.

As the clay is not burnt, it offers little resistance to erosion from the wind and the downpours of the annual rain period.

Unless they are lived in and renewed every few years these buildings are soon level with the earth from which they are made. The huge walls which surrounded many towns only a generation ago have now all disappeared.

The Frankfurt scientists, led by Elke Haberland, aim to record and analyse the clay buildings in Mali, Upper Volta and parts of Niger, where the most important examples of clay architecture are to be found.

Two aspects here are of especi... portance: the historical and the ... gical. Clay architecture is an imp... chapter, hitherto unjustly neglec... Sudanese cultural history.

The social aspect of clay archi... had hardly been studied at all ... now. The Frobenius Institute ... aims also to uncover possible co... tions between environment and ... structures and the impact of these ... nections in cultural and economic ...

Such studies have up to now te... to concentrate on unearthing the ... This time the contemporary fac... also taken into account. Slogans su... negritude and authenticity are ... bandied about in these contexts bu... too often people do not realise wh... specifically meant by them.

The great heritage of African ... — apart from such familiar comple... sculpture — are often not only ig... or simply disregarded but some... even disdained. A certain modis... logical trend which aims to ov... the traditional and the antique ... place it by the progressive is a de... factor here. Mosques for exampl... built in a pseudo-Moroccan style re... iscent of European neo-Gothic.

The Institute plans an exhibition ... its finds at a later stage. The aim of t... is to popularise and publicise this k... of architecture and not least to ... Africans themselves aware of its imp... tance in their culture.

Another aim will be to stimulate t... use of this native technology, impro... and thus replace the desolate "mode... African architecture which seems t... consist largely of corrugated iron ... cement buildings.

Such modern architecture has ... paid scant attention to one of the ... positive structures in African society: t... family. It was in traditional clay buil... ings that the African family was be... able to live and develop.

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 10 September 19...)

'Archaeological desert' risk, says museum chief

West Germany is in danger of becoming an archaeological desert, according to Professor Hugo Borner, director of the Roman-Germanic Museum in Cologne.

In a lecture, Borger complained that many *Land* conservation authorities simply did not have adequate finances to meet their task.

So-called deep-ploughing methods in forestry are also a threat, having destroyed between 10 and 15 per cent of archaeological substance in Lower Saxony.

This is all the more tragic as the excavations in Cologne had shown what modern archaeological methods could achieve.

Since 1971, 28 important monuments and relics of former centuries have been discovered during excavations in Cologne, contributing decisively to an understanding of the city's history. Among these finds were: a Roman brick works, an early Stone Age settlement and part of the town's mediaeval wall.

And it was modern transport needs of all things that favoured this development. The archaeologists went in to areas planned for underground and road development to find and save what could be found.

But Borger stressed that if important archaeological material is to be saved, large amounts of money and expensive experts are needed. *Fred Hoffmann/dpa*

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 11 September 1980)

Von Wissmann, traveller-scholar in the great tradition

The man who produced the first reliable map of Hadramaut, in Yemen, would have been 85 on 2 September.

Hermann von Wissmann died in September last year in Tübingen. He was a universal scholar, a type which sadly is becoming ever rarer.

He was one of the leading experts on south west China and the south of the Arabian peninsula; he was an orientalist, ethnologist, linguist and historian.

Von Wissmann's map of the Hadramaut was published by the Royal Geographical Society of London in 1958. It is still more accurate than many aerial maps of the area.

Von Wissmann was also one of the leading German traveller-scholars of this century, carrying on the great tradition of Niebuhr, Seetzen, von Maltzan, Glaser and Leo Hirsch.

This delight in travel was in von Wissmann's blood. His father was one of the best known African scholars of the Wilhelminian era and later became the first Governor-General of German East Africa. Von Wissmann was born in the Rhineland but grew up in the Steiermark, which he regarded as his home.

After studies in Jena, Giessen and Munich, von Wissmann went on his first major study tour abroad, with Hamburg geographer Carl Rathjens t... Yemen.

Imam Jahja, ruler of the remote ... dite state in the south west corner of the Arabian peninsula, had invited th... two scholars. And so, like Carsten Nie... buhr 150 years before, they travelle... from the sultry climate of Hodeida o... the Tihama coast to the Yemenite hig... lands of Sana. Imam Jahja wanted the... to help in the excavation of the temp... of the ancient Arab sun goddess ... Badan. Archaeological field research w... in its early stages at the time.

Von Wissmann turned his attentio... to his second main area of geographical specialisation South West China at the beginning of the thirties. He took up a professorship at the Chinese National University of Nanking.

In the six years he was there he wen... on expeditions to all parts of the coun... try, concentrating on the province of Yunnan on the border with India.

In 1938 the Sino-Japanese war forced von Wissmann to return to Europe. Un... til his retirement, he taught as professor and director of the Tübingen University Geography Department and deputy di... rector of the Tübingen Institute of Eth... nology.

One of his main preoccupations ...

Continued on page 12

BOOKS

Respected literary club leaves the turbulent days behind

Süddeutsche Zeitung

The turbulent days of the West German Pen Club are over.

At this year's meeting of the club in Bremen, there were none of the angry scenes of a few years ago which culminated in 50 members leaving this respected literary association.

Most of the dissidents were politically conservative.

The chairman of the club, Walter Jens and the general secretary, Martin Gregor-Dellin, showed at this years' meeting that all that is past.

"The crisis is behind us," says Jens and it is true that the bickerings and acrimony of past years are a thing of the past.

There are, I believe, two main reasons for this. The left has had, to a large extent, its demands for adequate representation and influence met.

And so it has not made difficulties for the chairman's shrewd policies, which consisted in putting more emphasis on literary aspects. In other words the Pen Club left has suppressed its former tendencies to produce provocative resolutions and to become political.

Jens has pursued his policy of harmonisation so consistently and convincingly that even those who once regarded him as a representative of the left now feel that he represents their interests. So it was quite natural that the meeting unanimously re-elected the entire club leadership — Jens, Gregor-Dellin and the treasurer — for another two years.

Most of the other members of the club executive were also re-elected. There will not be a change in the leadership until the spring of 1982.

Two members of the executive, Thaddäus Troll and Walter Schmieding, have died and were replaced by novelist Christine Brückner and theologian Dorothee Sölle.

Their election means that women are now almost as strongly represented on the executive as men. The other women members are Geno Hartlaub and Ingeborg Drewitz.

The men on the executive are: Peter Härtling, Bernt Engelmann, Walter Fabian, Johannes Poethen and Gert Kalow.

Given the general harmony and the appreciative mood created by the calming of the atmosphere, it was natural that the meeting would unanimously pass two resolutions.

One deplored a statement by Shadow Chancellor Franz Josef Strauss who, according to a reliable report in the *Württembergische Zeitung*, said at an election meeting that it was time to put a stop to the activities of the "pen-pushing criminals" and "microphone agitators." In the context, it was clear that Strauss was referring to Jens.

The Pen Club resolution said: "This is the language of violence and brutal intimidation. Whoever, avoiding rational discussion, threatens people's basic rights, destroys the vital bases of democracy."

The second resolution was against increasing hatred of foreigners in West Germany. It recalled the fact that numerous Germans found political asylum in other countries during the years of Nazi rule. It said that the basic right of political asylum should not be diluted in any way.

The meeting went so quickly and smoothly that there was no need for the planned afternoon session. This was bad luck for writer Peter Rühmkorf, who arrived late. In 1967 the Group 47 passed an anti-Springer-resolution calling on writers not to write for the Springer press or have articles published in it.

Rühmkorf felt that not enough notice had been taken of this appeal even though the quality of the Springer press had not since improved — "the journalism in these papers is an insult to democracy."

Rühmkorf said that German writers today were less protest writers than *festschrift* writers.

Rühmkorf was able to air his plan and even gather signatures for it the next day but it was not discussed or even passed because the meeting proper had by then ended.

This was a pity, as the discussion might perhaps have given us a deeper insight into the state of consciousness of the Pen Club members present.

The only clue to this was the natural solidarity shown with the chairman who, after his election, declared, clearly referring to the Strauss speech: "You have elected a chairman who is part of the "political underground' and the 'literary subculture.' "

The main literary topic at the meeting was the literature of exile. A series of well-attended events attempted to bring nearer to the public the literature of exile which has never really made a major impact since 1945 — with some notable exceptions.

Feelings of writers in exile

The series opened with an uneven but absorbing evening in which former German writers in exile dexscribed their feelings on Crossing the Border. It continued with a panel discussion in which literary historians and archivists discussed the present state of research into the literature of exile.

And it concluded with an event in honour of Hermann Kesten — honorary president of the German Pen Club — in which contemporary German authors read texts by less well-know writers of exile. The evening became a homage by contemporary writers to the literature of exile.

The opportunities for research into the literature of exile today are unlimited, and funds are not lacking either. Nonetheless, it seems to have remained a domain of a few specialists such as Hans Albert Wagner. These scholars run the risk of making an ideology of their study of exile literature by making it into a genre of its own and interpreting it mainly politically.

It was noticeable, at least among the researchers present, that there was a tendency to discuss the subject almost exclusively in political and historiographical terms. Literary and aesthetic criteria did not seem to count for much.

So it was hardly surprising when Marcel Reich Ranicki objected to the study of exile literature from a political or "compassionate" perspective and insisted that literary criteria should be brought into play. H.A. Walter, in his overlong lecture of *Das Beil von Wandsbek*, a book on Germany written by Arnold Zweig in Palestinian exile, gave an involuntary demonstration of how fruitless a self-satisfied and limited-perspective study of the image of Germany in exile can be.

It is essential that in future the literature of exile should be regarded not as a special genre but as part of the general study of history and literature.

It is difficult to understand why Franz Josef Strauss so successfully halted attempts by his party colleagues Helmut Kohl, Bernhard Vogel and Richard von Weizsäcker to achieve a dialogue with German writers.

SPD leader Willy Brandt, himself a former writer in exile, was given a hearty welcome by the meeting. The subject on the agenda was the problem of the comparative failure in both German states to reintegrate the literature of exile. (Professor Kamnitzer, chairman of the East German Pen Club, was also present). It was a major achievement of the Pen Club to bring this important subject to the attention of the public.

The club's working topic next year — in Freiburg next May — is no less fascinating: literature and history.

Kurt Sontheimer

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 22 September 1980)

Black Africa theme of Frankfurt fair

Black Africa will be the main theme of this year's Frankfurt Book Fair, which will again be the biggest ever.

A total of 5,146 publishing houses from 94 countries will be taking part including representation from 31 Black African nations.

South Africa will be represented, although it did not get a special invitation. More than 300,000 new books will ne presented.

Hildegard Hamm-Brücher, Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Congolese writer and president of the African Writers' Association, Tchicaya U Tam'si, will speak at the opening.

Among the many special events under the motto Africa Seeking Its Identity are two exhibitions: in the Africana exhibition, 35 countries will present 3,500 books about the Black Continent.

And in the Africa Hall — number 7-202 publishers from 29 countries will present their books under the heading Printed and Published in Africa.

This exhibition will later be shown in Berlin, at Unesco in Paris and then in some African countries.

The fair will also set up a non-profit-making Third World Agency with its own stand.

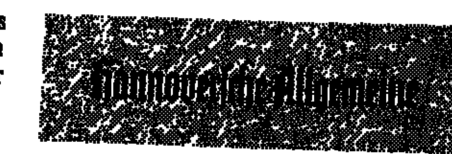
Its purpose will be to look after authors and stimulate ideas for translations.

dpa

(Frankfurter Neue Presse, 11 September 1980)

■ MEDICINE

Advance in pathology helps in study of why babies are born deformed



Hereditary malformation in babies is no more common than at the turn of the century, a congress in Münster has been told.

It had been widely thought among the public that the occurrence has become more frequent during the century.

But this was strongly rebutted at the Eighth Congress of the European Society for Teratology.

One hundred and fifty delegates from 16 countries attended.

They were told that the rate in percentage terms of children born with malformations is no higher than at the turn of the century.

The point is that we know much more about hereditary anomalies than did our forebears. In many cases, progress in biochemistry, genetics and pathology has enabled doctors to follow up the less conspicuous anomalies.

Since Siamese twins and two-headed babies are as rare today as they were in the past, researchers assume that the lesser anomalies have also not increased markedly.

This does of course not apply to the 1950s with the thalidomide babies. We have still not overcome the thalidomide shock and the fear is that a similar incident could happen.

But it was said time and again on the periphery of the conference in Münster that an incident of similar proportions is unlikely.

Though certain medications have been suspected of causing malformations, the suspicion has not been confirmed.

An American study, for instance, surveyed the effects of various drugs on more than 80,000 pregnant women and a similar German study reviewed well over 10,000 pregnancies.

But these are still too few to arrive at a definite picture. This also shows how difficult and how costly it is (the American study cost many millions of dollars) to arrive at absolutely certain results.

The only thing women can do during pregnancy to reduce the risk to their babies as much as possible is to forgo all drugs not prescribed by a doctor.

Women should also forgo alcohol during pregnancy.

Professor Frank Majewski of the Institute for Human Genetics and Anthropology of Düsseldorf University told the delegates that alcohol is the most frequent cause of development disorders of the embryo.

There are said to be between 200,000 and 300,000 alcoholic women of child bearing age in West Germany. Their progeny could have any number of malformations. In most cases the head is too small, development is hampered and there are conspicuous facial anomalies. These include shorter noses and receding chins.

There are also frequent heart disorders, joint anomalies and genital disoders.

Almost all children of alcoho[lic moth]ers are mentally handicapped. [This is] particularly true in the case of [the] mothers who continue drinking [during] pregnancy.

According to Professor Maje[wski, an] estimated 1,800 children with [alco]hol disorders are born in this [country] every year. But since there are [no] official records on malformati[ons, the] figures are based on estimates.

The past few years have been [marked] by many research results that [shed] light on the causes of malformati[ons].

Much of today's research conce[ntrates] on the placenta which is partly [from] the mother's body and partly [derived] from the shedding of the skin [of the] fertilised ovum. For the child, the [pla]centa is the most important organ [and] accounts for all the functions of [which] the child itself is incapable.

The Münster meeting clearly de[mon]strated that there is much [need for] progress in the field of tetralog[y ...] in 70 per cent of malformation ca[ses the] reasons are unknown. There is [still] much to be done.

Konrad Müller-Christ[...]

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 8 Septem[ber 1980])

Prevention is ideal, but no longer cheaper than cure

Preventive medicine might be better than cure, but it is by no means cheaper. Rising health costs mean that hopes held out for prevention have been too high.

Psychologists have provided an explanation of this. They say that nobody can show great interest in the long term asset "health" if he has to put up with temporary discomfort or forgo unhealthy habits.

Moreover, much that goes under the heading "preventive medicine" is no more than early diagnosis — which is not even effective in many cases.

One of the four days of the 6th annual Congress of the International Society for Preventive Medicine in Berlin was devoted to "Preventing the face from aging", involving plastic surgery.

The chairman of the Congress, Professor Joachim Jabka, a plastic surgeon.

He told the delegates that, unlike cosmetic surgeons, he and his colleagues wanted to preserve the typical features of the patient.

The Berlin specialist related the relatively unknown fact that the cartilege tissue of the nose continues growing until death. As a result, the human nose grows bigger and bigger: in males by about 4mm lengthwise and 3mm in width. The female nose grows by 6 and 3.5mm respectively between the 30th and the 80th year. And since the circumference of the head shrinks in age, the nose becomes even more prominent.

But this need not be so. Preventive surgery can stop such a development. Plastic surgeons know that a scar on the nose prevents the growth of the cartilege. Professor Jabka makes use of this fact to counter the excessive growth of the nose, especially in women, by minor surgery at the age of between 30 and 40.

The operation creates a small scar and so retards the growth. The scar, incidentally, is on the inside and not visible.

The surgeon called on the national health service to bear the cost of such preventive surgery.

But plastic surgeons represented only one branch of medicine at the Congress. Others spoke on the preventive character of genetic counselling, prenatal diagnosis and modern obstetrics.

The dentists said that they were pondering possibilities of preventing caries and paradontosis.

Dermatologists engaged in preventive medicine by warning against excessive subathing and improper use of sun lamps, both of which promote premature aging and can cause skin cancer.

Justin Westhoff

(Der Tagesspiegel, 16 September 1980)

Continued from page 10

this period was research into the c[om]paratively unknown era of Arab h[istory] before Mohammed.

Although Arab culture reached [its] apogee under Islam, Arab scholars [are] now increasingly concentrating on [the] ancient Arabian empire of the Mina[eans,] Sabeans and Himiarites in the south [of] the peninsula. The image of the Ar[abs] in history has changed considerably [in] the past two decades — a proc[ess in] which von Wissmann played a vital [role].

Wolfgang G. Le[...]

(Frankfurter Allgemeine [Zeitung] für Deutschland, 17 September [1980])

The doctor's dilemma: what to tell the cancer victim

A discussion as part of the Therapy Week in Karlsruhe showed that there are no firm standards of conduct on one of the medical profession's toughest jobs: the information to be given to or with withheld from a cancer patient.

The only general maxim that transpired was that the patient must be treated as a person and not be left alone in his plight.

The theme of the discussion between a general practitioner, a radiologist, a surgeon, a psychiatrist and an experienced nurse was: "Truthfulness at the sickbed — even with cancer patients?"

The actual problem was not "truth itself" — in other words, the matter-of-fact description of a medical condition — but the emotional involvement of the doctor.

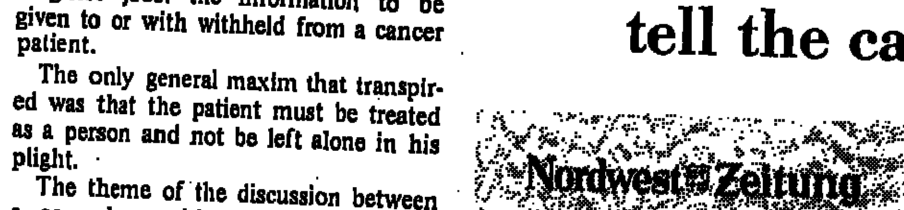
Participants and the audience agreed that this required three major elements: the doctor must inform but he must not foist himself on the patient and must not deprive him of hope.

He must tell the truth but — if necessary — not the whole truth. He must talk about death without calling it by name. But all this confronts the doctor with almost insoluble conflicts, making him "speechless".

The unconscious fear of his own death in the face of the death of others makes the doctor stop at the door of a terminal case. Yet he does not enter the room — doctors, too, suppress death. The fact is that cancer patients are visited less frequently than others.

Cancer is a spectre of modern industrial society and rigid concepts of it frequently stop people talking about it.

No doctor, it turned out, finds it easy



to talk about it to a patient. He knows that there are many types of cancer; but the patient does not want to know about them. All he wants is an answer to the question: Do I have cancer... must I die?

The psychiatrist called on the media to inform the public that there is no such thing as cancer in general. There are only many forms of malignant tumours that vary in frequency and and respond differently to therapy and that therefore the prospects of survival also vary from case to case.

The doctor, the psychiatrist said, is today the only person still in a position to call death by name. For the rest, our vocabulary has displaced the word, and we speak of "the departed", "gone to rest", etc.

The general practitioner held that the doctor has to develop a stable relationship of confidence with the patient, preserve the patient's independence and combat his fear and uncertainty.

Days later, he told the patient that the disease was caused by malignant cells and that there was a possibility of lung cancer. The only possible treatment was by medication, he said. During another visit, the doctor discussed the therapy and its prospects. He and the patient agreed on a wait-and-see attit[ude].

The patient, an artist, initially reac[ted] by listening without replying. But [then] he understood and began to talk.

Full information was given in bits [and was] therefore easier to bear.

The surgeon said that doctor-patie[nt] relations are frequently intensified wh[en] the patient is told of the diagnosis. [In] fact, it is not the patient but the doc[tor] who is afraid of putting the truth in[to the] open. Something to be borne in mind is that very few cancer patients commit suicide.

The nurse earned the most applause. She described her own conflict: What must I do when the doctor refuses to inform the patient who then turns to me for an answer? For legal reasons, the nurse may not provide the information. "All I can do is put pressure on the doctor."

"Information imparts new life, and [I] have been amazed time and again how the illness makes the patient mature."

She cited a leukaemia patient who said shortly before his death: "My last year of life has been the most important for me."

Klaus Dallibor

(Nordwest Zeitung, 15 September 1980)

SOCIAL WELFARE

Prostitutes' self-help plan for new life



Even Hamburg's official tourism promotion brochure speaks of the city's prostitutes as if they were some sort of commodity:

"Those who need a girl for *l'amour* are best off on Herbert Street." The brochure goes on to tell visitors that they "rarely get it at the price they have bargained out in the Eros Centre. But you can have fun without trouble in the contact cafés."

This contempt for the prostitute is also evident in dealings with women who want to get out of prostitution and lead a normal life.

Inhabitants and social workers of The Ark, Hamburg's self-administered home for former prostitutes, have experienced this time and again.

Instead of accepting the women's decision to start a new life as proof of moral strength, the city's welfare office intimates that they are unable to take their lives into their own hands.

Last December, The Ark moved into a derelict house in a Hamburg suburb. The women fixed the building, decorated their rooms and furnished a common room. Now they are working on a hobby room and a party basement.

There are five women to each storey where they share a kitchen and a bathroom. They cater for themselves.

In group discussions, the women learn that prostitution is not due to individual failure but that it is a problem of society itself.

During their stay in The Ark they busy themselves trying to find an apartment and a suitable job.

The social workers don't consider themselves as some superior educators who want to rid their "clients" of all conspicuous traits and lead them back to "normal" life. They consider that the women can only build self confidence and independence by administering their new home on their own.

It was this concept that was presented to the Hamburg Welfare Authority as a basis for further financial assistance. But it met with little understanding.

The State Rehabilitation Agency wrote to The Ark that "former prostitutes would be overtaxed by the concept of a 'women's house' once they have opted out of their profession and are faced with the necessity of becoming integrated into normal life. Any reintegration of these women presupposes a certain stage of development that would take a long time to reach."

In their angry reply, the social workers told the authorities that they did not view the inhabitants of The Ark as clients and that it was not their intention to "integrate them into a normal life".

Instead, the idea was to lend them a hand in leading a life as they themselves see fit.

But the social workers and the authorities are not only at odds regarding the concept. They also don't see eye to eye on the financing.

So far, The Ark has been financed by making use of the controversial Section 72 of the Social Welfare Act which reads: "Persons who are hampered in participating in community life through special social difficulties are to be given assistance to overcome these difficulties if they are not capable of doing so from their own resources."

This section of the Welfare Act was originally meant to apply to the homeless, ex-prisoners, juvenile drug addicts, etc.

Thus the inhabitants of The Ark — like those of homes for battered women — are discriminated against as not being capable of forming part of the community, and this has had financial consequences: The agency pays a daily DM78.35 per inhabitant of The Ark. But the moment occupation drops below 80 per cent (there are 14 places at present), the budget no longer works. As a result, The Ark demands a fixed annual sum to be paid from the city budget.

Financing via Section 72 involves yet another problem: the social workers must write a special "social report" on every newly admitted tenant, describing the situation of the person concerned and making a development forecast.

But exactly this is contrary to their concept. They don't want to act as the long arm of the authorities because this would endanger the relationship of mutual confidence.

Moreover, many inhabitants of The Ark fear that the "social report" will brand them for the future.

The personal dossier can be handed from one government authority to another.

All this makes the women of The Ark special cases while the situation of prostitutes is simply "an extreme form of the man-woman relationship in our society."

Werner Sökeland

(Die Zeit, 19 September 1980)

Bonn backs scheme to help battered children

Pilot projects aimed at improving protection for battered children have begun in Berlin and Gütersloh.

The projects involve centres equipped to house children in groups. Finance is being provided by the federal, state and municipal authorities, including the Bonn Family Affairs Ministry, which alone is contributing DM3.3m.

In the past, assaulted children were simply removed from the family — if any action at all were taken.

The new system is aimed at maintaining family stability.

The pilot projects are intended for an initial three-and-a-half years. The intention is to counter battering by the family, which costs more lives than all children's diseases put together, on a voluntary and non-penal basis.

Institutionalised children frequently turn to crime as soon as they are committed to a home.

Physical mistreatment at home gives way to psychological neglect in the institution. As a result, children become criminal at an above average rate.

Yet the preparation for such a career in crime costs the taxpayer a monthly DM3,000 to DM5,000 per institutionalised child: this is the monthly rate for bed, board and supervision.

Berlin and Gütersloh now hope to use this money more successfully. Fulltime and honorary staff of the project want to use counselling and, when necessary, therapy to get at the root of the problems in the family that led to the child battering in the first place.

The ultimate aim is to restore the family to the point where there is no longer any danger to the child and hence no necessity to have it institutionalised.

The Youth Assistance Act, which has so far been blocked by the conservatives, could provide a basis for such centres nationwide.

There is no sign of red tape at the Berlin centre. Since help in case of child battering must be made available swiftly and be easily accessible, the staff work from 9a.m. to 8p.m. on normal weekdays, and round the clock Friday through Sunday.

But even after 8p.m. on weekdays there is still an answering service in operation. Unfortunately, funds won't stretch to manning the telephone throughout the night.

In many cases, mere telephone counselling can be helpful. Desperate parents and children, friends and relatives, can be helped by giving them pointers on the public institutions that could be of assistance in any particular case.

Frequently, the six fulltime and nine honorary staff members are called out to help cope with a crisis.

Families already under the care of the centre and others that have had no dealings with it before see their last possibility in a desperate phone call. The calls are triggered by violent fighting, intended suicide, nervous breakdowns — frequently in connection with alcohol abuse.

These crisis missions can take hours or, indeed, a whole day.

Most people visit or phone the centre of their own accord.

Of the 70 families that have received intensive counselling so far, 55 reported on their own and 15 were sent by doctors or teachers.

Of course, the centres try to encourage doctors and teachers to gain the families' confidence and so help them.

The Berlin centre looks after 40 to 50 families at any given time — mostly by telephone because guilt feelings prevent the people from showing up in person.

Mostly, the acute danger to the child can be overcome after the first session of talks. But actual "treatment" takes longer (sometimes up to two years).

The Berlin centre was very recently augmented by a children's home with nine places in an old Berlin villa. Here, children for whom it would be too dangerous to stay at home live in a family type atmosphere with a maximum of two children per staff member. But only children whose parents have agreed are accepted and the parents have regular visiting rights.

Here, too, the ultimate aim is to restore the family and spare the child institutionalisation.

Willi Carl

(Vorwärts, 18 September 1980)

Rewards of fostering

Looking after a foster child is tough. Foster children who stay with their own families are scarred by past experience.

Their great need of love and, consequently, their behavioural disorders require much patience by the foster parents.

Yet according to the Hamburg Welfare Authority, taking on a foster child is by no means an incalculable adventure if foster parents and children are carefully matched.

There can be no disputing the fact that foster children, all of whom have suffered setbacks, stand a better chance with a foster family than in an institution. Moreover, the foster family benefits from the pride and pleasure derives from the child's progress.

The Youth Authority stresses that the number of satisfied foster families proves the success of fostering.

Hamburg is experimenting with new ways of finding foster homes. The state's senator for labour, youth and social affairs, Jan Ehlers, now wants to advertise in radio, television and press to bid to find more foster parents.

There are some 100 Hamburg children hoping to benefit from the campaign.

Some 2,000 children in this city live in foster homes. Another 600 have found places on the outskirts of the city.

The city now has 2,250 children (… per cent) who — for one reason or another — cannot live with their own families and must therefore be institutionalised. In 1972, there were … 1.2 per cent.

There is a clear trend now to institutionalise children only if all other measures such as educational counselling, group discussion or teaching … have failed and there are clear behavioural disorders.

Eighty per cent of Hamburg's institutionalised children are older than … The children for whom the city is looking for foster homes are also mostly school-going age, ranging between 7 and 12.

Many of them suffer from behavioural disorders such as inability to communicate, aggression, anxiety or lack of concentration.

Hamburg's new drive is based on a psychological study on the motivation of foster parents, the image of foster parents and children and the foster parents' wishes regarding counselling.

According to the study, most foster parents are motivated by their pleasure in having children around them. But social involvement and the desire to help a child to achieve a more satisfying life also play a major role.

What troubles foster parents most is the lack of public recognition.

They complain that the public is not familiar with their true motives and that it frequently assumes that the only reason they took on a child was financial gain.

According to the Hamburg authorities, such an assumption is untenable. The money paid for a foster child's upkeep is only just enough to cover expenses.

The new psychological study will also be used to cope with the dissatisfaction of foster parents with the authorities.

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 18 September 1980)

SPORT

Beckenbauer leaves US on the crest of a championship wave

His forehead was bathed with sweat, his face marked by the strain, and round his hips he had a towel. Franz Beckenbauer was telling the Americans, probably for the 20th time, that it was enough to say goodbye.

Beckenbauer's team, Cosmos, had just won the North American football championship with a 3-0 victory over Fort Lauderdale Strikers. Italian striker Giorgio Chinaglia had rammed two of these goals but the fans and reporters were all crowding around Kaiser Franz.

Beckenbauer's smile disappeared only once. A German reporter said he could feel confident about his return to the Bundesliga. Beckenbauer, straight-faced, said: "I'll have to play a lot better there."

But his critics don't think he'll have too much trouble.

German FA President Hermann Neuberger, who saw the game and was invited by Henry Kissinger to present the trophy, said: "Franz has shown everyone that he has not forgotten how to play football. I wouldn't even rule out his comeback in the national team."

Gerhard Müller, his former Bayern Munich and German national team colleague, said: "Of course he will make it, but he mustn't let them persuade him to play anywhere but libero."

Libero is the term used to describe a player played deep in midfield with the specific role of building up attacks.

Müller, now playing for the Strikers, had to pull out of the game after 40 minutes with a muscle injury.

Hennes Weisweiler, five times manager of championship winning sides (Mönchengladbach three times, Cologne once and Cosmos) said that Beckenbauer need have no worries about returning to the Bundesliga.

The apparent contradiction — praise from others, self-criticism by Beckenbauer — becomes easier to unravel when one looks closer at Müller's words. Müller, who is rather chubbier but still lethal in the box, has put his finger on what Beckenbauer has tried to overlook.

Beckenbauer has made too many compromises about what position to play in. Since he has been with Cosmos he has, with a few brilliant exception, played in midfield.

A few weeks ago, when Beckenbauer played libero instead of the injured Brazilian Carlos Alberto, the *New York Times* wrote: "Now the New York fans know what they have been missing for years."

But Beckenbauer is not so sure. He is so plagued by doubts about whether libero is his natural game that he reacts defensively to compliments.

Example: a reporter said it was obvious that he would play libero with his new club, Hamburg SV.

Beckenbauer: "Of course I would like to. But this is a matter for the manager, Herr Zebec."

And Beckenbauer would not have played libero against Fort Lauderdale if Weisweiler had not gently persuaded him to do so, even at the risk of a row with Carlos Alberto, the team's usual libero.



Franz Beckenbauer (Photo: Horstmüller)

When Weisweiler told Alberto late in the afternoon that he was dropped, Alberto at first refused to sit on the substitutes' bench. It was not until the Cosmos bosses backed Weisweiler that Alberto acquiesced.

But after the game he said: "I have now two possibilities. Either to accept the situation or to hit back. I have decided for the second. I will never play for Herr Weisweiler again."

Weisweiler: "In the heat of the moment one says many things. Franz has proven that he is the better player."

It was not surprising that Beckenbauer was twice beaten during Lauderdale attacks. He had such difficulties in the past too. Schwarzenbeck often had to clear up more situations behind Beckenbauer than the Kaiser's fans would be prepared to concede.

In Hamburg, he will have the support of Kaltz, Jakobs, Buljan and Groh if he should slip up.

Beckenbauer's incomparable qualities are now, as always, in attack. He only made one wrong pass in the final. He was the schemer, the play maker, the best man on the park.

Of course one has to see things in proportion. By Bundesliga standards the pace in the first half was slow, though it picked up considerably in the second.

Cosmos, despite all the work Weisweiler has put in, still cannot be compared with a leading Bundesliga team such as Bayern Munich or Hamburg SV.

Nonetheless, soccer is making a major breakthrough in the USA. German FA President Neuberger did not rule out the possibility of Fifa adopting the US 35-yard offside rule and staging the 1990 World Cup in the US.

"And if Colombia cannot stage the 1986 finals, the Americans have said they will step in."

Cosmos paid 120,000 dollars win bonus for the final. Bernd Schuster the Cologne international midfielder whom Cosmos want to replace Beckenbauer with, could become a rich man in the US. Cosmos officials are now negotiating his transfer with Cologne.

Fears that Schuster would be lost to German football are misplaced. First, Neuberger intends to dictate tough terms to ensure he is released for international games. And second, the quality of the final showed that the Americans can produce quite a tasty brand of football themselves.

Kurt Röttgen

(Die Welt, 23 September 1980)

Referees are target of the latest Breitner outburst

Paul Breitner, Bayern Munich's captain and midfield ace, has spoken out again.

This time, it is the referees that are the target of his outburst.

He says referees are "complete beginners", "actors", and "people with pent-up aggressions."

However, he concedes that the escalation of trouble on the field is due to his player colleagues rather than the referees.

Breitner's statement that many players today practise cunning and fouls which referees cannot see speaks volumes.

Whenever Breitner says anything, the sparks fly. Before this latest outburst an illustrated magazine published a series of verbal broadsides against the German Football Association.

And the pictures showing Breitner and the national team manager, Jupp Derwall, in a chummy pose after Bayern's championship victory earlier this year, are still fresh in the memory.

The picture was taken after Breitner had publicly spoken out against Derwall.

Jupp Derwall has got over this now. He attributes Breitner's outbursts to his temperament and does not believe that they are his real convictions.

However, there is considerable doubt whether the referees who will soon be looking into Breitner's behaviour will take this generous view.



Paul Breitner (Photo: Horstmüller)

They have been subjected to below the belt attacks totally without objectivity.

An appeal to the fairness of his colleagues would be more in order than criticising the men in black.

Horst Müller-Marz

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 20 September 1980)

International athletics ends on a brighter note

What looked like being the unhappy ending to an unhappy season ended up for the good after all, said Adrian Paulen, the Dutch President of the International Amateur Athletics Federation, after the eight-nation athletics cup in Tokyo.

At the same time it became clear that the criticism of the Japanese organisers, who dropped the points rating under pressure from the Soviet Union who feared defeat by the Americans, was based on false premises.

If the hosts had not accepted the Soviet demands, the Soviet team would not have appeared in Tokyo and Paulen would not have been able to say that "Moscow is still interested in cooperation in sport and does not intend to reply to one boycott with another."

It is completely irrelevant in this context that Russian fears of a lowering of their international standing following a defeat by the Americans were unfounded — although their attitude conforms to our image of the importance attached to sporting prowess in the East Bloc.

After the Olympic boycott had split international sport, Tokyo's function was more in the realm of sport politics than of sport. And that function has been fulfilled, thanks to Japanese tolerance and readiness to compromise. There now seems little danger of a split in the IAAF.



It seems that the Soviets do not want to bear grudges. Boycott and counter-boycott are now, one hears, to be forgotten. It must not necessarily be assumed that this is mere lip service. More than the boycotters from Canada, the USA, West Germany, Norway and Japan, the Soviets need to compete with the West. How else than through sport can they demonstrate the superiority of their system?

The Russians had however indicated even before Tokyo how seriously they took the continuation of sporting competition with the West. They took part in the decathlon international with West Germany in Westphalia at the beginning of September. This was already a sign that the fronts had softened.

Given this surprising change from confrontation to cooperation, we can all breathe a sigh of relief. Let us hope that it lasts.

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 22 September 1980)